

Message Text

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14

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSCE-00 NSC-10 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00 PRS-01 OMB-01 RSR-01

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P 221030Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2695

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

USDEL JEC PARIS PRIORITY

CINCPAC PRIORITY

COMUSSAG PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 8786

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CB

SUBJECT: LON NOL MANEUVERS TO HOLD UP HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL
MEETINGS AND FORCE AGREEMENT ON A REPLACEMENT CABINET

1. WITH IN TAM NOW APPARENTLY WILLING TO STAY ON,
THE MAIN CURRENT THREAT TO POLITICAL STABILITY COMES
FROM MANEUVERING BY LON NOL.

2. SOCIO-REPUBLICAN SECRETARY GENERAL HANG THUN HAK
TELLS ENDERS TODAY THAT HIS OWN REPEATED CONTACTS
WITH IN TAM THE PAST FEW DAYS CORROBORATE THE
IMPRESSION WE HAVE THAT IN TAM IS WILLING TO STAY ON.
HAK HAS REPORTED THIS TO LON NOL, WHO HAS AUTHORIZED
HIM TO INFORM IN TAM THAT "HE HAS NO OBJECTION TO
IN TAM'S STAYING ON INDEFINITELY". HOWEVER, LON NOL
SAYS, THERE REMAINS THE QUESTION OF THE DISPOSITION OF
THE LETTER IN TAM WROTE SIRIK MATAK AUGUST 8, ASSERTING
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THAT COEXISTENCE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ARMY

WOULD HENCEFORTH BE IMPOSSIBLE. LON NOL TELLS HAK THAT SHOULD SIRIK MATAK RAISE THE LETTER AT A HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL MEETING, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO DEBATE THE ISSUE. IN THE COURSE OF THE DISCUSSION POSITIONS MIGHT BE TAKEN WHICH "COULD LEAD TO IN TAM'S RESIGNATION." ON THIS PRETEXT, LON NOL POSTPONED FOUR SCHEDULED HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL MEETINGS LAST WEEK AND ONE THIS WEEK.

3. MEANWHILE, HAK REPORTS, LON NOL HAS NOT SLACKENED OFF BUT RATHER STEPPED UP PRESSURE ON THE SOCIO-REPUBLICANS TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH SIRIK MATAK'S REPUBLICANS ON MEMBERSHIP IN A CABINET TO REPLACE THE IN TAM GOVERNMENT. HAK SAYS THAT HIS CENTRAL COMMITTEE IS UNANIMOUS IN OPPOSING SUCH A GOVERNMENT, ON THE GROUNDS THAT (A) EVEN A SHORT POLITICAL CRISIS NOW WOULD WEAKEN THE GKR IN THE FACE OF THE ENEMY, AT ALGIERS, AND AT THE UNGA; (B) THE NEXT GOVERNMENT SHOULD OPEN NOT TO THE RIGHT, BUT TO THE LEFT, TOWARDS THE DEMOCRATS, THE TEACHERS, AND THE STUDENTS; AND (C) A NARROW POLITICAL FORMATION MIGHT PROVE UNABLE TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OF THE COUNTRY IN THE FACE OF STUDENT AND TEACHER HOSTILITY. HAK ADMITS THAT DISCUSSIONS ARE UNDER WAY WITH THE REPUBLICANS ON CABINET COMPOSITION, BUT ASSERTS WITH MUCH FORCE THAT THE SOCIO-REPUBLICANS WILL DRAG THEIR FEET AND NOT PERMIT A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION. HAK SAYS THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO OPPOSE THE MARSHAL OPENLY ON THIS ISSUE, BUT HAS BEEN RAISING EVERY POSSIBLE OBJECTION. THE MARSHAL REMAINS ADAMANT THAT THE TWO PARTIES SHOULD COME UP WITH AN AGREED LIST.

4. COMMENT: IT IS NO SECRET THAT LON NOL WOULD LIKE TO BE FREE OF THE HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL. IN TAM HAS GIVEN HIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO, WHICH HE APPEARS NOW RATHER TARDILY TO BE PUTTING HIMSELF IN A POSITION TO EXPLOIT.

5. WHILE IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO PROVIDE A QUICK TRANSITION TO A NEW CABINET SHOULD IN TAM AGAIN

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REVERSE HIMSELF AND ZUIT, LON NOL'S DOUBLE MANEUVERING IS

UNHEALTHY. WE GAVE HAK ALL THE STIFFENING WE COULD, AND HE ASSURES US THAT HE WILL HOLD OUT. MEANWHILE, I WILL USE THE OCCASION OF A CAL ON SIRIK MATAK THIS AFTERNOON AGAIN TO MAKE PLAIN THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO KEEPING THE HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL INTACT, AND TO USING IT TO GET ON WITH THE COUNTRY'S BUSINESS. ENDERS

IS PUTTING THE SAME MESSAGE TO REPUBLICAN PARTY SECRETARY
GENERAL OP KIM ANG TODAY.
SWANK

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NNN

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